

EMERGENCY PLANNING - BOMB THREATS

BOMB THREATS

The Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999 require employers to have in place procedures for serious or imminent danger, these procedures will need to take into account the risk of staff being endangered by explosive devices or incendiary devices. The procedures to be followed in the event of a bomb threat should be clearly set out in workplace health and safety policy documents.

SOURCES OF BOMB THREATS

There are many groups who are capable of causing disruption and injury through the use, or by threatening the use of explosive devices. Bomb threats may be conveyed in several ways, these being:

- (a) Telephone Calls Bomb warning will often be made by telephone, and could be received by any member of staff. All staff should familiarise themselves with the procedure for dealing with such calls and follow the bomb threat procedure, including completing a checklist for telephone bomb warnings. An example checklist is included which should be available in every workplace.
- (b) By Letter Any member of staff receiving a written bomb warning should initiate the bomb threat procedure.
- (c) In Person If someone alleges that a device has been placed the member of staff given (or overhearing) the warning should initiate the bomb threat procedure.
- (d) By Discovery of a Suspect Package Any person discovering a device should initiate the bomb threat procedure, this will initially mean evacuation of the immediate area.

ACTION REQUIRED TO DEAL WITH BOMB THREATS

The action required of anyone learning of or detecting a suspicious object is:

1. Safeguard personnel threatened/potentially threatened.
2. Inform senior staff of threat (if applicable).

In an organisation such as the Isle of Wight Council it is not possible to make specific people or groups of people responsible for action. Therefore, it is essential that the member of staff receiving the threat or discovering a suspicious object accepts responsibility for taking charge and that other employees react to their instructions. The person taking charge should only pass responsibility for controlling the situation to a more senior employee or Police Officer.

The emergency actions required of a person discovering a threat are as follows:

- (a) Inform your line manager/supervisor, or the most senior member of staff on duty. If they are unavailable take responsibility for the situation yourself.
- (b) Manager/supervisor decides what action is to be taken.
- (c) Inform the Police (dial 999 in every case).

BOMB THREAT PROCEDURE

THREAT RECEIVED/SUSPICIOUS OBJECT DISCOVERED

**INFORM YOUR MANAGER/SUPERVISOR
IF THEY ARE UNAVAILABLE TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR
THE SITUATION INFORM THE POLICE - DIAL 999**

**INITIATE ACTION - UNLESS YOU ARE SURE
IT IS A HOAX THIS WILL MEAN EVACUATING/
SEARCHING THE BUILDING - POSSIBLY BOTH**

**ONLY HANDOVER CONTROL OF THE SITUATION TO
A MORE SENIOR EMPLOYEE OR A POLICE OFFICER**



BOMB THREAT CHECKLIST HS2.11

ACTION TO BE TAKEN ON RECEIPT OF A PHONED BOMB THREAT

PAY CAREFUL ATTENTION TO WHAT IS BEING SAID, KEEP THE TELEPHONE LINE OPEN EVEN THOUGH THE CALLER HAS DISENGAGED

Obtain as much information as you can completing this form as you go.
Where automatic number reveal equipment is available, record the number:

.....

RECORD THE EXACT WORDING OF THE MESSAGE

.....

.....

.....

ASK THESE QUESTIONS

1. Where is the bomb?

2. When is it going to explode?

3. What does it look like?

.....

4. What type of bomb is it?

5. Did you place the bomb? Why?

.....

6. Time of call and duration

RECORD THE TIME CALL COMPLETED

Time Hrs Date

NOW NOTIFY THE POLICE/CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER IMMEDIATELY

Police informed – name & contact no

CEO/Director Informed

THIS PART SHOULD BE COMPLETED ONCE THE CALLER HAS HUNG UP AND THE POLICE/CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER HAS BEEN INFORMED

ABOUT THE CALLER

Sex of Caller? Male Female

Nationality? Age?

THREAT LANGUAGE

Well Spoken Irrational Taped Foul Incoherent

Message read by threat-maker:
.....
.....

CALLERS VOICE

Calm Crying Clearing throat Angry Nasal

Slurred Excited Stutter Disguised Slow

Lisp Accent Rapid Deep Familiar

Laughter Hoarse

If the voice sounded familiar, who did it sound like?
.....

BACKGROUND SOUNDS

Street Noises House Noises Clear Animal Noises PA System

Crockery Motor Voices Static Music

Factory Machinery Office Machinery Railway station

Others (specify)

REMARKS

.....
.....

Signature Date

Print Name

DEALING WITH BOMB THREATS/SUSPECT DEVICES

If a telephone bomb threat is made to your workplace or a suspect device is found at your workplace, it will be necessary to decide whether to evacuate the premises.

The choices open to a manager in the above circumstances are as follows:

1. To do nothing.
2. To search and then evacuate if a suspicious object is found.
3. To evacuate all except staff who are to search the premises and evacuate if a suspicious object is found.
4. To evacuate immediately without searching.

Option 1 Although this may appear attractive if the threat appears to have come from a juvenile or drunk, it should not be adopted unless you are absolutely sure the call is malicious, if there is any doubt you must use one of the other options.

Option 2 This choice means leaving people in the building for longer than necessary if there is a bomb present. However, if a suspicious object is found they can then be evacuated away from the danger. If nothing is found and there are no other significant factors, you may then after consultation with other staff declare the building safe. This option may be appropriate if the threat is assessed as being low.

Option 3 If the level of threat is considered moderate, but there is no reason to believe an explosion is imminent, or the device is small i.e. letter/small incendiary and some parts of the premises are considerable distances from the device, consideration should be given to partial evacuation of the premises, or retaining only essential staff and search teams on the premises.

Option 4 If a call is received or device discovered which it is believed presents a high risk, then evacuation of all staff from the building as quickly as possible should be undertaken. If a time is given then managers should ensure all searches are finished and staff cleared 20 minutes before the deadline passes, whether a device has been found or not.

Discovery of a Suspicious Object If at any stage a suspicious object is found staff should follow these rules:

- Do not touch or move object.
- If possible leave a distinctive marker near (not touching) the object.
- Inform your line manager (if available).
- Commence Evacuation Procedures.

When planning your evacuation procedures and deciding upon an assembly point it will be necessary to consider the following:

- The assembly area should be at least a distance of 400 metres from the building; car parks should not be designated as assembly points; where possible, two assembly points should be identified.
- When an evacuation is initiated doors and windows should be opened (to disperse the

blast), lights left on (in case anyone has to return to the building in the dark), but any plant and machinery shut down where practicable.

- A method must be devised to check that everyone has left the building and all personnel, staff and visitors have been accounted for.

ASSESSING THE THREAT

It is possible for managers to make valid assessments of the threat which may be presented to their workplace by applying commonsense principles together with general knowledge of home affairs. The following list should be considered when assessing any threat:

- Is your organisation likely to be targeted by particular terrorist groups?
- Are you located close to premises which may be specifically targeted by terrorists?
- Consider the track record of active terrorist groups as reported in the media, have organisations similar to your own been targeted in the past?
- Is there anything about your organisation, which may attract terrorists/individual acts of violence?
- Consider the vulnerability of your organisation, if your workplace were targeted what methods might be used (be realistic!) and how easy would it be for them to carry them out.

Further advice can be obtained from the Crime Prevention Department of your local police station. Please contact Emergency Planning staff if you would like a copy of the County Hall document "Action on Bomb Threats". Emergency Planning staff can provide assistance in devising a suitable procedure document.